



# News Release

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## **California Receives U.S. Surgeon General's "Healthy Youth for a Healthy Future Champion Award"**

### ***Award Recognizes Outstanding Organizations Implementing Innovative and Creative Approaches to Preventing Childhood Overweight and Obesity***

Sacramento – The Acting Surgeon General Rear Adm. Steven K. Galson has awarded the "Healthy Youth for a Healthy Future Champion Award" to the California Department of Public Health's Network for a Healthy California, a campaign that empowers low-income Californians and their families to live better by eating healthy and being physically active every day. The award recognizes and showcases communities and programs across the nation that address childhood overweight and obesity prevention by helping kids stay active, encouraging healthy eating habits and promoting healthy choices.

"We know that reversing the rates of childhood overweight and obesity in California takes all of us working together, including valuable partnerships with the federal government," said Gov. Schwarzenegger. "Our children are California's greatest asset, and we are committed to improving their health and wellbeing."

The Network for a Healthy California is made up of more than 160 locally funded projects and 11 regional networks spanning California. Nutrition and physical activity outreach programs are conducted at an estimated 10,000 community sites each year, specifically designed to reach low-income African Americans, Latinos, low-resource schools, grocery retailers and worksites.

Students are an important target of outreach efforts and are engaged in activities through a variety of settings. Among the funded projects are 37 low-resource school districts representing 2,885 school sites and approximately 765 after school sites. This translates to thousands of California teachers, school nurses and other school personnel making nutrition education a priority for low-income students.

"The California Department of Public Health is honored to receive this prestigious recognition," said Dr. Mark Horton, Director, California Department of Public Health. "We know that healthy children are more likely to grow up to be healthy adults. Learning the importance of good nutrition and physical activity can have a lifetime of benefits."

The Healthy Youth for a Healthy Future Champion Award was presented today in Los Angeles during a stop on Acting Surgeon General Galson's nationwide tour to promote the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Childhood Overweight and Obesity Prevention Initiative. In recognition of the California Department of Public Health's innovative approaches to combating childhood obesity, the Office of the Surgeon General has adapted the Network for a Healthy California Spanish-language "Mi Cocina" ("My Kitchen") television advertisement for use

at future tour stops and other venues across the country. Mi Cocina features real-life moms sharing different ways they are taking action and affecting healthy changes in their families' eating habits.

Childhood overweight is a serious health concern for children and adolescents in the U.S. 41 percent of California children ages 9 to 11 are overweight or at risk of becoming overweight. Eating more fruits and vegetables every day and increasing physical activity can help reduce the risk of serious health problems, including obesity, heart disease, type 2 diabetes and certain cancers.

More information about the Network for a Healthy California is available at [www.cdph.ca.gov](http://www.cdph.ca.gov)

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